



Sunday, November 14, 2021 | No. 194

Film Flashback... "NETWORK" Premieres on 11/14/1976

When MGM's "NETWORK" premiered in New York Nov. 14, 1976, its portrait of network television news was seen as a cartoonish satire, but 45 years later it looks entirely too real.

Director Sidney Lumet and screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky exposed TV's willingness to do anything to boost ratings & revenues. Chayefsky's story centers on Howard Beale, news anchor for the fictional UBS-TV. Peter Finch played Beale, whose ratings are sagging until he announces on air he's going to kill himself on the show next week. When his audience share soars, programming chief Diana Christensen (Faye Dunaway) creates an angry show about radical extremists with Beale as "The Mad Prophet of the Airwaves." Cooler heads like news president Max Schumacher (William Holden) don't prevail and Beale's on air madness continues -- until he unexpectedly changes gears, losing his audience and value to UBS (no spoilers here).



"The Tube Lies" - [Click to Watch](#)

Beale tells his millions of viewers to open their windows and scream into the night, "I'm as mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore." It brings to mind contemporary TV news personalities for whom audience manipulation is now a nightly routine.

Beale's line became one of the best known movie lines ever. Ironically, it wasn't delivered exactly as written because Finch added the word "as" between I'm and mad -- but there was no footage available to edit it. Even more ironically, Chayefsky's deal guaranteed none of his lines would be changed in any way unless he approved. He also had the right to be on set daily and to physically be very close to the actors. To make such proximity work, cinematographer Owen Roizman created what was called "Paddy's Light," illuminating a spot where he could stand without ruining a take.

The networks disliked how NETWORK portrayed them and wouldn't make studio and control room facilities available for shooting in New York. It was too costly to build them, so those key scenes were filmed in Toronto at CFTO-TV. Beale's intense "Mad as Hell" outburst was so physically demanding on Finch, who had a history of heart trouble, that he could only do three of the four 2-and-a-half minute takes Lumet wanted. Take 3 ended about half-way through when Finch couldn't continue.

NETWORK brought Oscars to Chayefsky for original screenplay, Dunaway for lead actress & Beatrice Straight for supporting actress as the wife Schumacher cheats on with Christensen. Finch died in January 1977 -- before winning the best actor Oscar posthumously.



Peter Finch plays News Anchor Howard Beale
- [Click to Watch](#)

"We know things are bad, worse than bad, they're CRAZY! It's like everything everywhere is going crazy so we don't go out anymore. We sit in the house and slowly the world we're living in is getting smaller and all we say is please, at least leave us alone in our living room, let me have my toaster and my TV and my steel belted radials and I don't say anything, just leave us alone. Well I'm not gonna leave you alone! I want you to get MAD."

Weekend Box Office Results... 11/12 – 11/14

Courtesy of [Comscore](#)

Rank	Title	Week	Theatres	Wknd \$	% Change		Per Theatre Average \$	Total \$
					10/15	10/8		
1	Eternals (Disney)	2	4,090	27,500,000	-61	-	6,724	118,765,255
2	Clifford the Big Red Dog (Paramount)	1	3,700	16,420,000	-	-	4,438	22,000,775
3	Dune (Warner Bros.)	4	3,282	5,500,000	-29	-50	1,676	93,126,283
4	No Time to Die (UA Releasing)	6	2,867	4,620,862	-23	-22	1,612	150,476,875
5	Venom: Let There Be Carnage (Sony)	7	2,538	4,000,000	-10	-22	1,576	202,707,190
6	Ron's Gone Wrong (20 th Century)	4	2,430	2,200,000	-38	-5	905	20,776,296
7	The French Dispatch (Searchlight)	4	1,225	1,840,000	-29	-1	1,502	11,618,679
8	Belfast (Focus)	1	580	1,800,000	-	-	3,103	1,800,000
9	Spencer (Neon)	2	1,265	1,531,662	-27	-	1,211	4,710,980
10	Antlers (Searchlight)	3	1,825	1,200,000	-39	-54	658	9,638,534

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DICK WALSH'S Industry Update Weekend Review for 11/12–11/14

As predicted, ETERNALS won the weekend with \$27.5M in ticket sales, a drop of 61% from its opening last week. CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG took second place by grossing a better than expected \$16.4M for Friday-Saturday-Sunday and \$22.0M after including results from Wednesday and Thursday, its initial two days in theatres. DUNE took third place with \$5.5M in its fourth week, a drop of only 29% when compared with last week's results. All pictures added up to \$70.5M this weekend, 65% of the \$109M earned in the same weekend in 2019. This will be the highest 2021-2019 weekend comp for the industry until 12/17.



The next two weeks are the Thanksgiving play period, usually one of the most lucrative two-week stretches of the year. Unfortunately, this year's lineup of new releases will come up short compared to the 2019 slate.

THANKSGIVING RELEASES 2019 VS. 2021

2019			2021		
Release	Total		Release	Total	
Date	Title	Box Office	Date	Title	Box Office
11/22/21	Frozen 2 (Disney)	\$477M	11/19/21	Ghostbusters: Afterlife (Sony)	\$120M
11/22/21	A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood (Sony)	\$62M	11/19/21	King Richard (Warner Bros.)	\$30M
11/22/19	21 Bridges (STX Entertainment)	\$29M	11/24/21	Encanto (Disney)	\$85M
11/27/19	Knives Out (Lionsgate)	\$165M	11/24/21	House of Gucci (UA Releasing)	\$40M
11/27/19	Queen and Slim (Universal)	\$22M	11/24/21	Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City (Sony)	\$25M
Total Box Office		\$755M	Estimated Total Box Office		\$300M
2021 as a % of 2019		40%			

This year's Thanksgiving releases may achieve only 40% of the numbers produced by 2019 movies that opening during this period. This leaves the industry in an uncomfortable position, even after a great October run. The current weakness is mostly due to the relative lack of commercial appeal for this year's studio releases, rather than COVID's influence.

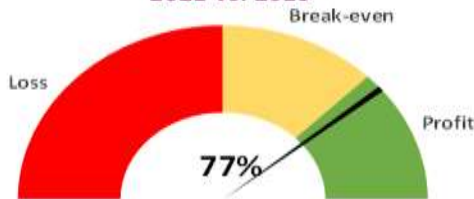
FROZEN 2 produced \$477M in its North American run which began on 11/22. This is likely to come in at 50% more than the total for all five movies that will debut over the next two weeks! Paramount's decision to push TOP GUN: MAVERICK to next year, coupled with earlier releases for this season's blockbusters DUNE, NO TIME TO DIE, VENOM: LET THEIR BE CARNAGE and ETERNALS have left the cupboard bare for Thanksgiving, when it would be expected that moviegoers should be most available to flock to theatres. Christmas 2021 – 2019 comps also look difficult, so Exhibition will have to run things very tight for the next six weeks, with no improvement expected until 12/22 at least.

Where Are We as of 11/11

The 45th film week of the year which ended on 11/11 came in at a very respectable 88% of the same week from 2019. Marvel's ETERNALS was up to the challenge of competing with four titles that opened in the same week in 2019. This elevated the first six weeks of Q4 2021 to 75% of the same period from 2019 and the trailing four-week run rate comparison is now 77%. The year-to-date comparison for 2021–2019 through 45 weeks ticked up another percentage point to 35%.

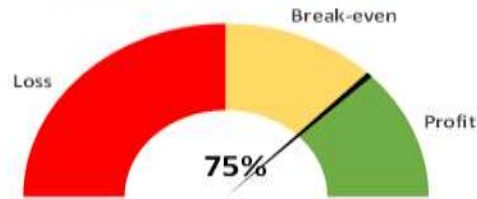
As noted above, the industry has reached a peak in a roller coaster ride with a steep drop ahead. For the next month or more, exhibitors will have to grip tightly, while the glow fades away from a sizzling October.

Run Rate Last 4 Weeks
2021 vs. 2019



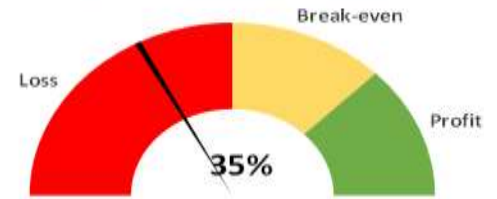
Box Office Results - Run Rate (Last 4 Weeks)		
2021	\$ 127,610,000	77% (2021 vs. 2019)
2019	\$ 166,593,000	

Q4 2021 to Date vs. Q4 2019



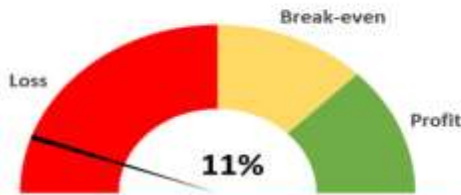
Box Office Results Weeks 40-45		
2021	\$ 814,016,000	75% (2021 vs. 2019)
2019	\$ 1,086,995,000	

YTD 44 Weeks 2021 vs. 2019



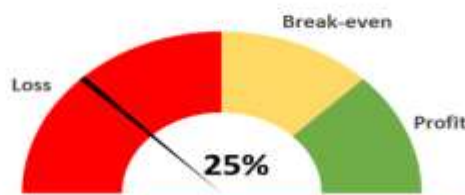
Box Office Results Weeks 1-45 Year to Date		
2021	\$ 3,391,332,000	35% (2021 vs. 2019)
2019	\$ 9,663,349,000	

Q1 2021 vs. Q1 2019



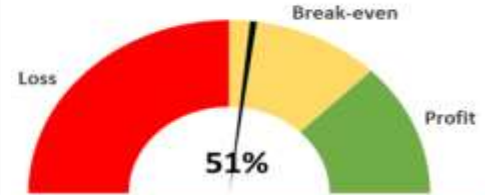
Box Office Results Weeks 1-13		
2021	\$ 258,059,000	11% (2021 vs. 2019)
2019	\$ 2,346,839,000	

Q2 2021 vs. Q2 2019



Box Office Results Weeks 14-26		
2021	\$ 834,122,000	25% (2021 vs. 2019)
2019	\$ 3,343,757,000	

Q3 2021 vs. Q3 2019



Box Office Results Weeks 27-39		
2021	\$ 1,368,747,000	51% (2021 vs. 2019)
2019	\$ 2,667,935,000	



Click to play our POPCORN PREVIEW BOXOFFICE BUZZ... today's Awards Alert look at Neon's romantic bio-drama SPENCER...from Pablo Larrain, acclaimed director of JACKIE. Kristen Stewart stars as Diana, Princess of Wales, whose marriage is collapsing during Christmas festivities at the Queen's Sandringham Estate.



Notable Industry News and Commentary... 11/8 – 11/14

[AMC posts narrower-than-expected loss, but CEO says there are still pandemic challenges ahead](#) (CNBC)

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AMC Entertainment announced its Q3 earnings last week, topping industry expectations and signaling increased momentum in the recovery of exhibition. The world's largest exhibitor reported \$763.2M in total quarterly revenue, having welcomed 40M guests to its theatres during the quarter, nearly twice the volume from the prior quarter. Revenues



from concessions reached \$265.2M, more than one third of its total revenues. Despite this growth, AMC still reported an operating loss of \$224.2M, with CEO Adam

Aron commenting, "We wish to emphasize that no one should have any illusions that there is not more challenge ahead of us still to be met." Aron added, "We need to sell more tickets in future quarters than we did in the most recent quarters."

The Bronze Batman statue outside the AMC Burbank 16 in Downtown Burbank California.

[Disney Streaming Sees Slower Growth as Consumers Venture Out of the House](#) (Wall Street Journal)

Disney+ experienced a significant slowdown in subscriber growth during the quarter ending October 2nd, adding only 2M new subscribers which was 7M fewer than analysts had expected. This announcement comes on the heels of last week's [quarterly report from Netflix](#) showing similar sluggishness in the U.S. where it added only 70,000 new subscribers during the most recent three-month period. Netflix now has an active subscriber base of 214M worldwide whereas the total for Disney+ stands at 118M.

Disney's CEO Bob Chapek gave his perspective on these disappointing results by saying that company's management was in it "for the long term, not quarter to quarter," and the service "is still on track" to reach its goal of having 230M-260M global subscribers by 2025. In the near-term, the company is taking steps to boost growth with events such as Disney+ Day, held on the two-year anniversary of launching the new service. This special event included new series premieres and a special introductory rate of \$1.99 for the first month of service for new subscribers.



Meanwhile, Disney's in-person entertainment offerings are seeing new life as pandemic restrictions are easing. Disney's theme parks business is surging again as well as the box office from theatrical runs of new releases such as BLACK WIDOW, JUNGLE CRUISE and SHANG-CHI AND THE LEGEND OF THE TEN RINGS.

[Members Divided as IATSE Contract Comes Up for Vote: 'A Lot of People Are Disappointed'](#) (Variety)

On Monday, the results will be announced for the vote by Hollywood's major trade unions on the labor contract which its negotiators hammered out with major studios. While the union's



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Publications · Tami Morris, Exhibitor Relations · Nicolas Bouchard, Film Distribution
Hollywood Insider · Robin Klamfoth, Advertising

leadership is urging members to ratify the proposal, many members are expressing concern that the agreement does not go far enough to long-held concerns, particularly in regard to working hours and conditions. Still, the prospect of a new work stoppage is unsettling to industry veterans, many remembering the disruptions caused on the strike of 2007–2008. Younger members appear to be more willing to vote NO on the current deal, holding out for better terms even if this results in a strike.

The vote format is similar to the U.S. electoral college, with each union holding a certain number of votes based on its size. Out of the thirteen participating union, the three largest - Cinematographers Guild, Editors Guild, and Prop Local – have the largest influence and could alone decide the overall outcome. If there is a split among them, then the tally from smaller unions will influence the final decision.

See also: [IATSE's Three Largest Hollywood Locals Could Determine Outcome of Contract Ratification Vote](#) (Deadline)



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MARTIN GROVE'S *Hollywood Report*

The doomsayers, having guessed wrong about exhibition's demise, are now obsessed with rotten reviews killing movies.

Wall Street analysts & consumer media pundits are happiest when they can claim the sky is falling. The Street, which makes money from technology, insists people would rather stay home and stream. They hoped audiences would abandon cinemas once they could see new event films from their couches.

What they didn't expect is that when the pandemic ebbed people wanted to get out of the house. Moreover, it's theatrical exhibition that actually makes event films "events." Playing in cinemas elevates a movie's profile through global media coverage that gets people's attention and reinforces the impact of studio marketing.

As for the media pundits, it's understandable that they want to promote the power of their reviews -- but today people don't read or rely on reviews as they once did. That accounts for Rotten Tomatoes' success with its boiled down critics scores. In the end, it's audience scores that matter most for everything -- like ETERNALS (pictured) with 46% from critics, but 80% with audiences -- except awards contenders.



* * *

It wasn't a big box office weekend, but there was lots of good news for exhibitors.

Disney/Marvel's ETERNALS fell just 61% to \$27.5M in weekend 2, holding way better than media pundits predicted given its rotten reviews. It's already done \$118.8M domestic. Clearly, Marvel movies aren't review driven.



Paramount/Scholastic's CLIFFORD (pictured) opened to \$22M for 5 days, beating Hollywood handicappers' expectations for \$15-17M, despite playing day & date on Paramount+. So much for the media's message that family movies are on thin ice because parents won't risk taking kids to cinemas. This view makes even less sense given media reports about how theme park revenues have soared -- thanks to the same parents taking the same kids!

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Sony/Marvel's VENOM: LET THERE BE CARNAGE has now done \$202.7M, making it only the second pandemic era film to crack \$200M domestic (after Disney/Marvel's SHANG-CHI AND THE LEGEND OF THE TEN RINGS with \$224.4M).

MGM/Universal/Eon's NO TIME TO DIE just hit \$150.5M domestic, the year's 6th biggest film -- a very respectable showing for a movie appealing to adults, who the media claims are reluctant to return to cinemas.

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Studio Release Calendar – 11/19-12/2

(Click on titles for more information)

11/19/21 (Week 47)

Prior Year Results

2020 Week 47 - Box Office: \$5,454,664

2019 Week 47 - Box Office: \$206,037,027; Openings: Frozen II (\$130.3M FSS, \$477.4M Total), A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood (\$13.3M FSS, \$61.7M Total), 21 Bridges (\$9.3M FSS, \$28.5M Total)

Ghostbusters: Afterlife (Sony) <i>Screening: Good to very good, entertaining, heartwarming, very commercial;</i> <i>Awareness/Interest: Skews young adult male; Viewer Preference: Rising interest and awareness. Theatrical viewing preferred; YouTube Trailer Views: 25M-35M estimated</i> <i>Critics: Positive for legacy of Ghostbusters and introducing something new, exciting; Comps: Free Guy (4,165 locations, \$28M FSS, \$121M total), Bumblebee (3,550 locations, \$22M FSS, \$153M Total, adjusted for inflation), Ready Player One (\$42M FSS, \$138M Total, adjusted for inflation)</i>	UPDATE	PG-13 Comedy Fantasy	124	Scope (2.40: 1), IMAX, Dolby Atmos, DTS:X, Dolby Vision, ICE, Screen X, D-Box, MX4D, Lumma, 4DX	Wide (4,000+)
King Richard (Warner Bros.) <i>Screening: An inspirational screenplay, Will Smith in a masterpiece performance;</i> <i>Awareness/Interest: Increasing incrementally, male/female near even in interest; Viewer Preference: Skewing more toward theatrical than home; YouTube Trailer Views: 15M-20M+ estimated; Critics: Will Smith's magnificent performance should draw a Best Actor nomination; Projection: Will Smith will carry the film. Outlook is average box office at the moment.</i>	UPDATE	PG-13 Biography Drama	138	Scope (2.39: 1), Dolby Digital	Wide (3,300+)
The Power of the Dog (Netflix)		R Drama	125	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited 11/17 Netflix 12/1
India Sweets and Spices (Bleecker Street)		PG13 Drama	101	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
The Feast (IFC)		NR Horror	93	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
Bruised (Netflix) <i>SCREENING: An unexpected stunner of a film. Halle Berry is brilliant in the title role. A compelling, heartfelt film with a rich well written screenplay.</i>	UPDATE	R Drama	129	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited 11/17 Netflix 11/24
Black Friday (Screen Media)		NR Horror	84	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
Kurt Vonnegut: Unstuck in Time (IFC)		NR Biography	127	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
Alpha Rift (Vertical Entertainment)		PG-13 Sci-Fi	95	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
The Youngest Evangelist (Atlas Distribution)		PG-13 Drama	138	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
C'mon C'mon (A24)		R Drama	108	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
Wheel of Fortune and Fantasy (Film Movement)		NR Drama	121	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited/Virtual VOD 1/11/22
The Mitchell's vs The Machines (Iconic Releasing/Netflix)		PG Sci-Fi Comedy	114	Flat (1.85: 1)	11/20-21 Theatrical/Netflix
Brian Wilson: Long Promised Road (Screen Media)		NR Documentary	93	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited 11/17/21

11/26/21 (Week 48)

Prior Year Results

2020 Week 48 - Box Office: \$13,135,452

2019 Week 48 - Box Office: \$181,076,542; Openings: Knives Out (\$26.8M FSS, \$165.4M Total); Queen & Slim (\$11.9M FSS, \$43.8M Total)

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Encanto (Disney) <i>Screening: Excellent animation, story, and audience appeal; Awareness/Interest: Above average and rising to high levels; Viewer Preference: Theatrical more than streaming; YouTube Trailer Views: 32.3M as of 10/29; Critics: NA; Projection: \$35M-\$50M (5-day), \$125M-\$150M total (Early estimate)</i> <i>Note: FAR FROM THE TREE, 7 min short subject animation, rated G playing with Encanto.</i>	UPDATE	PG Animation	102	Flat (1.85: 1), 3D SDR, Dolby Vision, 4K, Motion, Screen X	Wide on 11/24 (3,500-4,000+) 30-day window Disney+
Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City (Sony) <i>Screening: Scheduled for 11/18; Awareness/Interest: Average for Screen Gems film; Viewer Preference: Theatrical exclusive; YouTube Trailer Views: 10.5M as of 11/12; Projection: \$15M-\$20M (5-day), \$40M-\$45M total (early estimate)</i>	UPDATE	R Horror	107	Scope (2.39: 1)	Wide (3,000) on 11/24
House of Gucci (UA Releasing) <i>Screening: Great performances, sets, costumes. Sophisticated appeal, long run time; Awareness/Interest: Steady and rising for upscale audience, awareness average; Viewer Preference: Theatrical more than streaming; YouTube Trailer Views: 6.4M as of 10/28; Projection: \$12M-\$15M (5-day), \$35M-\$40M total (early estimate)</i>	UPDATE	R Crime Drama	157	Scope (2.39: 1)	Wide (3,200) on 11/24
The Unforgivable (Netflix)		R Drama	113	Flat (1.85: 1), 16.9	Moderate 11/24 Netflix 12/10
For the Love of Money (Freestyle)		R Drama	103	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
The Humans (A24)		R Drama	108	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited
The Summit of the Gods (Netflix)		PG Animation	95	Flat (1.85: 1)	Limited/Netflix
Licorice Pizza (UA Releasing)		R Drama	NA	Scope (2.39: 1)	NY/LA

Studio Release Changes

Title	Locations	New	Former
Studio 666 (Open Road/Briarcliff) Centers around the Foo Fighters band as they move into a notorious mansion in Encino known for its dark rock and roll history in an attempt to begin recording their long awaited tenth album. Just as the creativity gets flowing, Dave Grohl finds himself dealing with sinister supernatural forces that challenge not only the band's ability to finish the new album, but also to escape with their lives. Horror.	Wide	2/25/22	NEW
Aline (Roadside Attractions) Aline, a girl from Quebec, has a golden voice and music producer Guy-Claude has big plans for her. Celine Dion Biography. <i>The critically acclaimed musical comedy-drama world premiered out of competition at the Cannes Film Festival.</i>	Moderate	1/21/22	NEW
Cyrano (UA Releasing/MGM) Award-winning director Joe Wright envelops moviegoers in a symphony of emotions with music, romance, and beauty in Cyrano, re-imagining the timeless tale of a heartbreaking love triangle. Drama Musical.	Limited	1/21/22	NEW
Transformers: Rise of the Beasts (Paramount) Plot unknown. Reportedly based on the 'Transformers' spinoff 'Beast Wars' which feature robots that transform into robotic animals. Action Adventure Sci-Fi.	Wide	6/9/23	6/4/22
Untitled Star Trek (Paramount) Action Adventure Sci-Fi.	Wide	12/22/23	6/9/23
Untitled Hidden Empire Horror Film (Hidden Empire)	Wide	10/21/22	1/7/22
Montana Story (Bleecker Street) The Big Sky locale has a strong influence on the plot, which centers on a pair of siblings who return home to the sprawling ranch they once knew and loved, confronting a deep and bitter family legacy against a mythic American backdrop. The fates of their ailing, unscrupulous father, and a beloved old horse hang in the balance. Western Drama. <i>Acquired after TIFF screening.</i>	Limited	2022 TBA	NEW
President (Greenwich Entertainment) The movie charts the dangerous aftermath of Robert Mugabe's removal from power in Zimbabwe. Documentary.	Limited	12/17/21	NEW
National Champions (STX Entertainment) A star college quarterback ignites a players strike 72 hours before the biggest game of the year to fight for fair compensation, equality, and respect for the athletes who put their bodies and health on the line for their schools. Drama.	Wide	12/10/21	11/24/21

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The Contractor (STX Entertainment) After being involuntarily discharged from the Marines, James Harper (Pine) joins a paramilitary organization in order to support his family in the only way he knows how. Action Thriller.	Wide	3/18/22	12/10/21
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MPA Ratings

Title	Rating	Reason
Ambulance (Universal) A pair of thieves tries to pull off a bank robbery in downtown Los Angeles. When the heist goes wrong, the two hijack an ambulance to make their getaway. Michael Bay-Director.	R	Intense violence, bloody images and language throughout
Being the Ricardos (Amazon Studios) Shocking personal accusations, a political smear and cultural taboos threaten the relationship between Hollywood power couple Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.	R	Language
Ninjababy (Soro Films) Astronaut, forest-keeper, cartoonist. Young Rakel has a whole lot of other plans than becoming a mother. She would rather party, get drunk or stoned instead of sitting hours on the toilet. But she can't ignore it. Is it her or the baby? Comedy Drama.	R	Sexual content, language, some drug use and brief nudity
Run & Gun- The Director's Cut (Paramount) <i>Edited version</i>	R	Violence and language
Samaritan (United Artists Releasing) A young boy learns that a superhero who was thought to have gone missing after an epic battle twenty years ago may in fact still be around. Sylvester Stallone.	PG13	Strong violence and strong language
Two Deaths of Harry Baker (Saban Films/Well Go) When the famous outlaw Henry Baker is released from prison after 25 years, old friends and enemies are waiting for him.	R	Violence, language, sexual content, nudity and some drug use
Wolf (Focus Features) Believing he is a wolf trapped in a human body, Jacob eats, sleeps, and lives like a wolf – much to the shock of his family. When he's sent to a clinic, Jacob and his animal-bound peers are forced to undergo increasingly extreme forms of 'curative' therapies.	R	Some abusive behavior, sexuality, nudity and language
The Wolf and the Lion (Blue Fox Entertainment) A wolf pup and a lost lion cub are rescued by a girl in the heart of the Canadian wilderness. Their friendship will change their lives forever.	PG	Thematic elements, language and some peril
The Worst Person in the World (NEON) A modern dramedy about the quest for love and meaning in contemporary Oslo.	R	Sexual content, graphic nudity, drug use and some language



SCREENING ROOM



House of Gucci
(UA Releasing)
11/24/21 - Wide
Final Trailer, Poster



Sing 2
(Universal)
12/22/21 - Wide
Trailer #2, Poster

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